

U.S. Department of Education
2013 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program
A Public School - 13CA23

	Charter	Title 1	Magnet	Choice
School Type (Public Schools):	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of Principal: Mrs. Melodie Stibich

Official School Name: Jensen Ranch Elementary School

School Mailing Address: 2001 Carson Lane
Castro Valley, CA 94552-1001

County: Alameda State School Code Number*: 01611506113005

Telephone: (510) 537-6365 E-mail: mstibich@cv.k12.ca.us

Fax: (510) 728-9853 Web site/URL: www.jensenranch.cv.k12.ca.us

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that all information is accurate.

(Principal's Signature) Date _____

Name of Superintendent*: Mr. Jim Negri Superintendent e-mail: jnegri@cv.k12.ca.us

District Name: Castro Valley Unified District Phone: (510) 537-3000

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date _____

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Ms. Jo Loss

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date _____

**Non-Public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Director, National Blue Ribbon Schools (Aba.Kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, National Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) or its equivalent each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's AYP requirement or its equivalent in the 2012-2013 school year. Meeting AYP or its equivalent must be certified by the state. Any AYP status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take foreign language courses.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2007 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for that period.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 or 2012.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district 9 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
2 Middle/Junior high schools
2 High schools
0 K-12 schools
13 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 6057

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Suburban
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 4
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2012 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	36	29	65
1	38	34	72
2	37	32	69
3	35	38	73
4	37	29	66
5	34	31	65
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12	0	0	0
Total in Applying School:			410

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
52 % Asian
4 % Black or African American
6 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
19 % White
19 % Two or more races
100 % Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2011-2012 school year: 2%
This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Step	Description	Value
(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	6
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	2
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	8
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2011	410
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.02
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	2

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 14%
Total number of ELL students in the school: 59
Number of non-English languages represented: 16
Specify non-English languages:

Farsi (Persian), Filipino (Pilipino or Tagalog), Serbo-Croatian (Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian), Russian, Cantonese, Korean, Mandarin (Putonghua), Japanese, Armenian, Punjabi, Vietnamese, Greek, Hindi, German, Spanish

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 3%

Total number of students who qualify: 14

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 4%

Total number of students served: 16

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>0</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>12</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>4</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>14</u>	<u>4</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>0</u>	<u>5</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>0</u>	<u>5</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>
Total number	<u>17</u>	<u>20</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1:

26:1

13. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Daily student attendance	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%
High school graduation rate	%	%	%	%	%

14. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools):**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2012.

Graduating class size: _____

Enrolled in a 4-year college or university _____%

Enrolled in a community college _____%

Enrolled in vocational training _____%

Found employment _____%

Military service _____%

Other _____%

Total _____**0%**

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award:

☒ No

☐ Yes

If yes, what was the year of the award?

PART III - SUMMARY

In the rolling hills of the San Francisco Bay Area sits the close-knit community of Castro Valley, California. On the easternmost side of town, surrounded by picturesque canyons, lies Jensen Ranch Elementary School and the community that makes our campus a family.

Built in 1995, Jensen Ranch is one of nine elementary schools in the Castro Valley Unified School District. We pride ourselves on being the “second home” to an ethnically rich population of 414 Kindergarten through Fifth Grade students, speaking sixteen different languages. We recognize and embrace our diversity through our core curriculum, multicultural events/assemblies, and daily relationship-building activities. Each week begins with our Monday Flag Assembly, recognizing the accomplishments and efforts of our students, staff, and parents. On the first Monday of each month, our Principal and PTA also host a Coffee Hour where our families can get to know one another better over coffee and a light breakfast.

We are extremely proud of our accomplishments here at Jensen Ranch. We have fashioned an exceptional learning environment where all stakeholders expect both a high level of behavioral standards as well as academic achievement. Our students have consistently performed well on the California Standards Tests (CST) as a part of our State Testing and Reporting (STAR) accountability measures. Our Academic Performance Index (API) reached 982 this year, up from 978 in 2010-2011. Based on our most current data, 94% of our students scored Proficient or Advanced on the CST-English Language Arts. In Math, 96% of our students scored Proficient or Advanced. We have been recognized as a California Distinguished School three times: 2002, 2008, and 2012. This past year, Jensen Ranch also met 17 out of 17 Federal AYP criteria. The driving force behind our rigorous program is the belief that all students can and will learn if given the right supports. Opportunities for both challenge and remediation are informed by qualitative and quantitative data, providing our students with on-going, individualized support designed to promote optimal success.

Students at Jensen Ranch are immersed in a standards-driven core curriculum that is comprehensive and well balanced in skill development, conceptual understanding, and application of knowledge. Our skilled and knowledgeable staff utilizes data from STAR and our district’s multiple measures assessments to evaluate student learning and the efficacy of our instruction. Through the integration of our Megaskills and Soul Shoppe character education program, our students also learn to become well-rounded citizens, exhibiting character skills such as self-discipline, responsibility, and respect. As a result, our campus provides a physically and emotionally safe space, where all are encouraged to take risks in order to reach their potential. Our goal is to enable all Jensen Ranch students to become informed citizens who feel personally responsible in contributing positively to a 21st Century global community. To help us reach this goal, our emphasis for the past two years has been on enhancing the student learning experience via increased use of technology.

Teacher professionalism is exemplified by staff involvement in District and site curriculum committees. Additionally, each member of our staff actively participates in staff development opportunities provided by the site, District, and outside agencies. Each teacher can be observed modeling a culture of collaborative learning through designing curriculum, problem solving with colleagues, and modeling lessons for one another and for teachers visiting from neighboring schools.

Without our parent community, we realize we could not provide many of the learning programs currently available to our students. By volunteering in the classroom or participating in PTA, School Site Council, JAM (Jensen Arts and Music), or Music for Minors, parents convey their belief that “it takes a village to raise a child.” JRS continues to live up to its reputation as an exemplary school in the Castro Valley Unified School District. Our staff and parent community work together, sharing their expertise and ideas

to challenge, engage, and support our students. As a result, our students continue to demonstrate academic excellence and character traits of which we can all be proud.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

A. The foundation for powerful instruction at Jensen Ranch is built upon the California State Content Standards, a set of rigorous end-of-year grade level expectancies. Each May, students in second through fifth grade participate in STAR (Standardized Testing and Reporting) testing to help determine each child's level of mastery in relation to these standards. In 2000, California's Department of Education began providing schools with disaggregated assessment data in English language arts, allowing us to look at performance trends and make adjustments as needed. In subsequent years, mathematics, fourth grade writing, and fifth grade science data was also made available. Student performance on the CSTs (California Standards Test) is divided into five bands: far below basic, below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced. The results of these assessments, along with district developed summative measures, help our staff analyze the efficacy of our instructional program, and develop a plan for students not reaching proficiency. As part of our vision, the goals of our Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) depict every student scoring proficient or advanced on the CSTs. This past year, 94% of our students reached this level in English Language Arts (ELA); 96% of our students did so in mathematics. California State compares its public schools through an API (Academic Performance Index) score. This number, ranging from 200- 1000, is calculated by analyzing each site's achievement relative to its percentage of English Learners, socioeconomics, parent education levels, student ethnicity, and mobility rate. A score above 800 is considered exemplary. Our most recent API score was 982, and we continue to strive for 1000, knowing that the greater the number, the more students we are reaching. Our state-wide Similar Schools Ranking, comparing us with other schools of similar demographics, consistently puts Jensen Ranch at a perfect ten.

B. At Jensen Ranch, we believe that meaningful assessment is fundamental to powerful instruction and student achievement. Our multiple measures assessments and corresponding end of year minimum standards help us determine if individual students, as well as our subgroups, are making good progress. One of these measures includes our annual CST data. In looking at our CST results spanning the past five years, Jensen Ranch students have performed exceptionally well. In each of these years, at least 92% of our overall population has scored at the proficient or advanced level in ELA. At least 95% of our students have performed at this level in mathematics. In comparison to the state average, Jensen students achieve twenty to thirty points higher at every grade level. The same holds true when looking at the county data. In all but one grade level, there are four or fewer Jensen students not reaching the proficient or advanced level on STAR; additionally, at most grade levels, the number of students scoring basic, below basic, or far below basic has decreased in the past year.

While our three numerically significant subgroups include English Learners, Asian, and White students, our population is far more diverse than the numbers reflect. In order to meet the needs of all students, including our African American, Hispanic, low socioeconomic background, and students with disabilities, we carefully analyze each individual student's assessment data. This process unveiled that 100% of our African American students met standards in math; 93% met standards in ELA. 89% of our Hispanic students scored proficient or above in math, and 94% scored this level in ELA. In looking at our students with disabilities, of the fifteen students who took the ELA CST, 80% of them reached proficiency. In math, 94% scored proficient. We then pinpoint exactly who is not meeting, or is at risk of not meeting, grade level standards. We then allocate our intervention resources towards these specific students, a practice which has contributed to our consistent success. Strategic differentiation of curriculum and instruction is supported by our Student Success Team (SST) process and Response to Intervention (RTI) program. This systematic approach has had a tremendous impact on reaching individual students who are struggling. As a result, our students perform consistently high and we have not had significant gains or losses in terms of our achievement over the years.

When one looks further at last year's subgroup data, you will see that the percentage of our English Language Learner (ELL) population scoring proficient or advanced on the ELA and math portions of the CST was 76% and 92% respectively. In second grade ELA, there was a six point difference between the performance of our ELL (100%), Asian (97%), and White (94%) students. In grades three through five, we note that there is an achievement gap of ten or more points between our ELL students and their native English-speaking peers. This is in part because our numbers are so small; every student's score carries significant weight. For example, in fourth grade, 91% of our Asian and 100% of our White students scored proficient or advanced, as compared to only 60% of our ELL students. This 60% is actually the test scores of five students, two of whom did not meet grade level standards. Our annual CELDT (California English Language Development Test) scores provide us with additional information in terms of how our EL students are progressing; last year, 84% of our EL students were re-designated as English fluent.

2. Using Assessment Results:

At the beginning of the school year, before class is even in session, our staff identifies individual students in need of further intervention. In addition to STAR, we look at multiple pieces of classroom and district assessment data, and conference with parents and the previous year's teacher to determine the best course of action. If needed, Individualized Learning Plans are developed/updated and carefully monitored to ensure struggling students are making progress. Teachers are also provided with an updated SST folder, letting them know which students in their new class have been red flagged as needing extra support. The folder contains last year's standards based report card and all SST notes, including the action plan devised by the SST team the year prior. The teacher can easily identify the strategies and interventions that have been put in place, noting what worked or did not work in the past. Teachers are also given the information on a USB drive so that they can make updates electronically.

Our primary teachers use running records in Reading/ ELA to determine each student's individual reading level. Students are then placed in homogenous groups of three to four students for part of their daily reading instruction. Part of this process includes teaching students the "five finger rule" so that they can pick out "just right" books. We want our students to be challenged, yet not frustrated, by what they are reading; if they do not know five words on a page, the book is too difficult for them at this time. Each grade level has its own set of benchmarks throughout the year, including an end of year minimum standard. Teachers use this information to help guide their instruction, providing remediation and challenge as needed. Small groups are flexible in that all students progress at different rates. Our DIBELS screening, described in the Reading section of this document, provides teachers with additional assessment data as to which students may be in need of further support.

While we are fortunate that the majority of our students perform exceptionally well, it is our goal that 100% of Jensen students meet end of year expectations. This requires that our staff uses the available data to increase student learning through improved instruction. Our school very much believes in the power of common formative assessments, and they are administered regularly. In grade level teams, our teachers analyze test questions, design assessments, and look for reoccurring student errors. If teachers find that students do not understand a specific concept, they will consult with their colleagues and reteach using a different approach. We also provide students with multiple methods of arriving at an answer; for example, in our third grade math classes, students are taught three different formats to solve long division problems. This helps us reach more students, especially those who struggle with the traditional algorithms.

Several grade levels have opted to platoon their students, using assessment data to help them reconfigure their classes for specific subject areas. Our second grade teachers regroup their students to differentiate spelling instruction, while our third grade teachers have created rotations for math problem solving, science, and social studies. In fourth and fifth grade, students are placed in homogeneous groups to complete in-depth novel studies and book projects. As a result, students then have the opportunity to work cooperatively with an additional set of like-ability peers.

Assessment data is shared with parents, students, and the community in numerous ways. Teachers meet with each parent formally in the fall, and then multiple times throughout the year as needed. In the spring, we hold parent conferences for students who are not meeting, or are at risk of not meeting grade level standards. Additionally, report cards are sent home three times each year, and mid-trimester progress reports help keep parents informed of their child's achievement. Teachers also utilize email, notes home and phone calls to communicate progress. Our students themselves are taught to use rubrics, analyzing their work against a pre-determined set of criteria. Students also meet with their teachers to discuss past assessment results, get input on written assignments, and feedback on oral presentations. Our older students are able to calculate percentages and averages, and with their teacher's guidance, they often set goals based on their own expectations of themselves. Our assessment data and achievement is always shared with the community. Before school starts in the fall, our STAR scores and those of neighboring districts and schools are posted in the local papers. Our principal also presents our data to our parent community via PTA meetings, School Site Council, and our school newsletter. We also include mention of our assessment data when we showcase our school as part of our annual presentation to the Castro Valley Board of Education.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

The success conveyed by our STAR results is a byproduct of the culture that permeates throughout Jensen Ranch. Staff and families work together to create a safe, nurturing, and successful learning environment. Our school is proud of its achievements and takes every opportunity to share our accomplishments, successful strategies, and best practices with other schools and the community.

With a dedicated and collaborative staff, Jensen Ranch has developed many instructional leaders over the years. Before becoming our site administrator, our principal was a fifth grade teacher here on our campus. Our teachers have served as summer school principals, Best Practices lab leaders (ELA instructional methodology course), district writing program coordinators, and mentors/ coaches for new teachers. One of our teachers, a trained reading specialist, facilitates guided reading and fluency workshops for teachers across the district.

At district curriculum meetings, or when collaborating with other sites, our teachers communicate their experiences. Whether sharing our thoughts on district assessment items, experimenting with Common Core strategies, or generating Donor's Choose grant ideas, our staff is always willing to help where needed. Our school has presented our SST process to the School Board, and other schools have adapted their procedures after observing our success. Members of our Kindergarten and fifth grade teams mentor colleagues from a nearby school, sharing effective curriculum and strategies. We have worked with other sites to collaborate on topics such as Brain Gym, Touch Math, ADHD interventions, and EL strategies.

To increase engagement and further prepare all students for the 21st century, the Jensen staff also shares lessons learned in the area of technology. One of our Tech Mentors attends the annual CUE (Computer Using Educators) Conference and brings back new technologies and strategies with staff. Staff members collaborate with technology leaders from other districts, discussing strategies for the classroom. With our recently installed eBeam interactive whiteboards and NComputing Systems, Jensen Ranch now serves as a pilot school for this new technology. We also recently purchased thirty-six Chromebooks in an effort to increase student access; our site's Tech Mentors will share their experiences with these new systems at monthly district technology meetings.

Jensen Ranch also shares its successes with the community through local newspaper articles in the *Castro Valley Forum*. Our school has been acknowledged for its recycled art projects, outstanding student citizen awards, and most recently, the new garden constructed by a local business and school volunteers.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

Student success is at the heart of everything we do, and we know that family engagement is an integral component. In the fall, families review our school handbook and sign our Code of Conduct, acknowledging their understanding of school policies and procedures. The dialogue is continued at Back to School Night, where academic standards and behavior expectations are thoroughly explained. During conferences, parents and teachers discuss student interests, review assessment data, and design learning plans for students who are struggling. Our Monday flag assemblies, weekly electronic newsletters, and classroom communications keep our community informed of the plethora of opportunities available for getting involved. Events such as the Walkathon, Holiday Sharing Assembly, Talent Show, and Play Day bring our families together. The community is further engaged through grade-level activities such as kindergarten orientation, first grade's egg-drop science competition, second grade's annual Science Fair, and our third grade musical, "Rumpus in the Rainforest." We celebrate our cultural diversity via our second grade Heritage Fest, fourth grade Passport Presentations, and fifth grade Folkfest, where families gather for a potluck dinner and learn folk dances from around the world.

Parents work closely with the staff by providing needed resources and input on ways to strengthen student experiences. Volunteers serve countless hours, helping with clerical tasks, fine-arts lessons, reading and math support groups, and EL extra support. Volunteers also assist with our computer lab and library, garden lessons, field trips, and special events. Our Tech Team, comprised of parents and staff, facilitated our technology enhancements. Parent volunteers and local businesses, Cleary Brothers Landscaping and Aran's Art Studio, constructed a school garden last spring. Members of our community are also actively involved in PTA and School Site Council. This year, our PTA auction brought our community together, raising over fifteen thousand dollars to further support our technology plans.

Recognizing we are part of a larger community, Jensen Ranch serves as a hub for after school activities. Students can participate in Chess Club, Girl Scouts, Science Adventures, and Chinese Language classes without leaving our campus. We also participate in outreach activities such as the Thanksgiving Food Drive and Adopt-a-Family programs. We have partnered with the Castro Valley Sanitary District to reduce trash, and we work with StopWaste.org on the 4Rs and protecting our local watershed. Our participation in these programs helps connect our school to the community and develops responsibility, teamwork, and compassion in our students.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

All core instructional materials used in our classrooms are State-approved and aligned with the content standards. In ELA, our district curriculum committee adopted Harcourt California Excursions. After careful analysis of competing publishers' materials, we determined that Harcourt best met the needs of our students. This comprehensive program encompasses phonics, phonemic awareness, reading comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency. EL support, intervention strategies, and enrichment components are part of the core program. Leveled readers in science and social studies help us differentiate instruction. Online resources, including the Think Central website, allow families to access learning materials from home. Supplementary materials such as trade books, novels, poems, and periodicals add variety to our instruction and provide exposure to different genres. Teachers incorporate strategies from The Write Tools to provide systematic instruction in writing. Our efforts have paid off; 96% of our fourth grade students scored proficient on last year's STAR writing test.

Harcourt also publishes our core mathematics curriculum. Our goal is to provide balanced instruction, using both paper-pencil activities and hands-on experiences to delve deeply into each concept. Algebraic thinking, problem solving, and vocabulary development is infused in each lesson. In addition to daily built-in standards review, regular formative assessments are provided guiding decisions about instructional practices. Electronic learning resources can be accessed at home for further support.

Our district's science program is exceptionally strong, with 83% of Castro Valley fifth graders scoring proficient on the 5th grade CST and 97% of Jensen's students achieved this level last year. This is the result of strategic instruction via our Scott Foresman materials, along with hands-on FOSS activities and our fourth and fifth grade Science Specialist program. Our detailed scope and sequence ties classroom learning to weekly activities performed in our state-of-the-art science lab.

Teachers use our Scott Foresman Social Studies curriculum, along with videos, field trips, guest speakers, and online resources, to develop foundational knowledge. Supplementary materials also include Time for Kids subscriptions for current events, and Reader's Theater plays, making history come alive.

Jensen students have multiple opportunities to participate in fine arts. In addition to the instruction teachers provide in the classroom, students participate in our JAM (Jensen Arts and Music) program. Led by parent docents, each trimester students learn about a composer and an artist, and then complete an art project of their own. Students attend plays, hands-on art lessons, musical experiences and museum visits. Fifth grade students participate in choir, and can also join our orchestra or band. Music for Minors docents provide instruction for grades K-three and third grade students receive instruction on the recorder. Teachers access one another's art lessons on our district website and incorporate them into their repertoire.

Physical education classes are based on state standards and taught by highly qualified PE specialists. First through fifth grade students participate in two fifty minute periods per week where concepts such as physical fitness and sportsmanship are stressed, along with manipulative skills such as throwing, catching, and dribbling. Our Macmillan McGraw Hill Health curriculum is taught by classroom teachers along with our PE and science specialists.

Fundraising efforts have focused on increasing student use of technology in our classrooms. We upgraded our systems, using a thin client solution to cut costs, and purchased interactive whiteboards for the classrooms. We received grants for software and have invested in training for teachers. Our Tech Team, made up of staff and parents, is currently developing a plan based around the Common Core standards.

Not only do we need to prepare students for the Smarter Balanced assessments in 2014, but for life in a global society, where technology skills are a must.

2. Reading/English:

Based on the findings of the National Reading Panel, the California Framework, and our own district Best Practices professional development model, our balanced literacy program is the cornerstone of our academic endeavors. As previously noted, we use Harcourt's California Excursions curriculum to help our students acquire foundational reading skills. Instruction focuses on building skills in phonics, phonemic awareness, reading comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency. At the beginning of each year, primary students are assessed using our universal screening tool, DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills). This research-based measure helps us identify students who may need additional instruction in order to become proficient readers. When students are determined to be in need of additional support, we analyze where the deficiencies are and devise an intervention plan designed to target individual needs. The classroom teacher will provide additional support, utilizing small group or individualized instruction. Students needing more strategic intervention will join our RTI (Response to Intervention) program. Students in RTI receive a double-dose of reading instruction, using research-based intervention materials such as K Pals, Road to the Code, Phonics for Reading, and Comprehension Plus. Their progress is carefully monitored, and interventions may be changed if we are not seeing adequate progress.

Initially, students are taught concepts about print, such as reading from left to right, and differentiating between letters and words. Children then listen for and identify discrete sounds, finding them in consonant-vowel-consonant words, and manipulating them to create new words. Once students have mastered these areas, we move on to increasing fluency and reading comprehension. Our teachers model fluent reading through read-alouds, chants, and rhyming activities as students work with decodable texts and learn high frequency words. Additionally, students are partnered with like-ability peers to read and track their fluency using the 6 Minute Solution. Reading comprehension is fostered through explicit instruction in Debbie Miller's reading comprehension strategies: asking meaningful questions, making inferences, forming mental images, etc. We also use Reading A-Z and Study Island software programs designed to strengthen comprehension. As students increase their reading skills, Reader's Workshop, book clubs, and novel study projects provide additional ways to challenge and stretch their abilities. Third grade students complete author studies on Patricia Polacco and Chris Van Allsburg while our fifth grade GATE (Gifted and Talented Education) rotation enjoys an annual Shakespeare study, complete with a performance for the rest of the school to enjoy.

3. Mathematics:

Our mathematics goal is to provide balanced instruction in a learning environment where students feel successful and meet grade level standards. Students need to be able to use mathematical reasoning to approach problems, use multiple strategies, find solutions, communicate thinking, and make connections to other problems. Instruction is balanced between conceptual development, skill building, and problem solving, with an emphasis on developing mathematical thinking and vocabulary.

Daily instruction includes spiral review to ensure previously learned skills are maintained. When tackling new concepts, students use manipulative models to develop meaning. Teachers use our state adopted Harcourt HSP Math, along with supplemental materials such as Touch Math, Math Their Way, Problem Solvers, and Family Math. Direct instruction is provided, along with opportunities for guided and independent practice. Learning centers, "pair-share," and cooperative learning games allow students to discuss their mathematical thinking with one another and further their conceptual understanding. Study buddies and peer tutors are also used to support students with their mathematical development. Problem solving tasks and math talks promote critical thinking skills and application of mathematical concepts.

Through flexible groupings, we provide differentiated instruction for students who are performing below and above grade level. Students participate in intensive small group pre-teach, direct, and re-teach instruction as needed. Additional support may also be provided through RTI sessions and the resource program. Grade level rotations and classroom centers allow for further differentiation to improve and extend skills. Electronic learning resources can also be accessed for extra support. We provide enrichment activities for those who demonstrate concept mastery and need more challenging work to extend their thinking. For example, fifth graders can participate in an advanced algebra unit and a home design project.

Although 96% of our students scored proficient or advanced on the Math CST last year, we are busy planning our next steps with the adoption of the Common Core Standards. Our staff must continue our own learning through increased collaboration and staff development as part of this process. We are developing common language to ensure consistent vocabulary in our instruction and teaching students how to solve problems using multiple methods to arrive at an answer. We require students to explain their mathematical thinking orally and in their Math Journals. Emphasis is placed on understanding how they arrived at a solution rather than on solely if the answer was correct or not.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Our exemplary science program supports the acquisition of essential skills and knowledge. Jensen Ranch students engage in a variety of standards-aligned learning experiences that cover the four science strands: earth, life, and physical sciences, and investigation and experimentation. Our students have regular opportunities to use their observational skills, develop hypotheses, ask questions, collect and interpret data, strengthen non-fiction reading skills, engage in collaboration, use critical thinking skills, construct meaning, and communicate their own thinking. Our students work towards mastering these skills through a variety of activities; our fifth grade scores on the CST Science assessment speak to our success, with 97% scoring proficient or advanced.

To build foundational knowledge and promote essential skills, our classroom teachers create hands-on lessons, utilizing our adopted Scott Foresman California Science materials, along with FOSS kits, AIMS materials, and other supplemental resources. Additionally, our fourth and fifth grade students participate in weekly, hands-on lab lessons with our Science Specialist; these lessons are aligned with classroom instruction. The school garden also provides further hands-on experiences, as each grade level has their own designated plot to plant, cultivate, and harvest. Since its construction last spring, the garden has been used to study the water cycle, weather and seasons, and plant and animal life cycles, as well as allowing integration across the curriculum with art, math, writing, and social studies. Our Family Science Night, second grade Science Fair, and third grade musical, “Rumpus in the Rainforest,” provide additional opportunities to acquire essential skills and knowledge, as students are able to observe, question, construct meaning, and communicate ideas.

All grade levels participate in science-based field trips that foster our students’ learning and growth. Students understand that learning can take place anywhere, as they become immersed in real-life experiences at the Palomares Science Expo, Lindsey Wildlife Museum, Davis St. Transfer Station, Black Diamond Mines, Calaveras Big Trees, Tech Museum of Innovation, and Chabot Space and Science Center. Additionally, Sulphur Creek Nature Center docents come each year to visit our classrooms, addressing the life science standards; their use of live animals gets the students excited about learning as it connects to the real world. Our fifth graders participate in StopWaste.org’s 4Rs and Our Watershed program, allowing students to see firsthand how science relates to real life and their community. In completing their service-learning project, fifth grade students acquire knowledge and skills that they can continue to use throughout their life.

5. Instructional Methods:

Our educational program provides students with opportunities to practice skills, construct meaning, ask questions, and apply their knowledge in both individual and cooperative tasks. Incorporating research-based strategies, daily instruction includes differentiated instruction based on the learning needs of ELL, at-risk, GATE, and students with disabilities. Individual, small, and whole group instruction is used strategically to support student learning. Lessons include strategies that address multiple intelligences, learning styles, and skill levels. Flexible groupings are used to pre-teach and re-teach concepts, access leveled reading materials, target specific skills, and explore topics in more depth. Math centers, literature circles, reader's workshop, and cross-age buddies are used to accommodate the diverse needs of our students. Teachers incorporate best-practice strategies in math and literacy, such as modeling subtraction with manipulatives and teaching grammar concepts through interactive writing. Project-based learning is used at all grade levels. Our second grade students complete dinosaur research and write reports in Science. In Social Studies, our fifth graders work in cooperative groups to develop Exploration of the Americas presentations of their simulated voyage.

For struggling students, intervention resources are targeted to help meet individual needs. Student progress with these interventions is monitored to determine next steps. When classroom strategies are exhausted, the SST process is initiated. Through this process, we brainstorm additional strategies, supports, and accommodations that can support a struggling student. If a learning disability is suspected, additional testing and services may need to be provided through the Special Education department.

Technology is used throughout the day to meet the diverse needs of our students. Our classrooms are equipped with eBeams, NComputing Systems, document cameras, and LCD projectors to make lessons interactive and collaborative. We believe that increased engagement in learning will lead to greater student achievement. Through the use of the eBeams, they might read and annotate text (fiction and non-fiction), draw diagrams, and participate in high interest standards-based games. Students access on-line content, research topics, and create documents, projects, and presentations using PowerPoint and Microsoft Word with our NComputing Systems. Students also have online access to Study Island and Reading A-Z programs, allowing for additional independent practice opportunities at home and at school. ELL students can use online content to access core curriculum materials and, in the upper grades, beginning ELL students use the Rosetta Stone software to aid their English language skills.

6. Professional Development:

High quality instruction is the cornerstone of student achievement, and as such, professional development for our staff is a key factor. Jensen Ranch's Single Plan for Student Achievement includes a professional development plan that is aligned to our state content standards, the California Blueprints, and our annual goals. All professional development focuses on teaching and learning needs as determined through analysis of assessment data and collaborative conversation. This year, much of our discussion has focused around the implementation of the Common Core standards, as well as enhancing student engagement and motivation through incorporating more technology into our daily lessons.

Our staff epitomizes what it is to work as a professional learning community (PLC). Three years ago, Jensen teachers voted to extend our school day Monday through Thursday so that we could dismiss students earlier on Friday, creating a block of dedicated collaboration time. During this time, our staff shares best instructional practices with one another, analyzes and calibrates student work samples, participates in differentiated professional development opportunities, designs PLC workgroup projects, and meets with our RTI aides to discuss progress monitoring data.

Our entire staff operates under the philosophy that we can all learn from one another. This philosophy begins at the district level. For example, at the end of last year, the district asked sites to identify teacher leaders in ELA and math. These teachers attend monthly trainings and share their learning with the rest of the staff during weekly staff meetings. This practice builds everyone's capacity. Additionally, to assist with next year's Common Core implementation, one of our district-wide staff development days focused

on teacher leaders helping us to develop an awareness and understanding of the depth and complexity of our new standards.

When developing our site goals, the Jensen staff recognized the need for additional support with technology, ELA, and math. We allocated funding this year to pay a small stipend to two of our teachers to serve as coaches with technology and ELA. Whether modeling guided reading and interactive writing, or installing Rosetta Stone software for our ELL students, our coaches help us ensure program consistency and high expectations for all students. We also have five teachers this year who are attending monthly Silicon Valley Math Institute trainings. Their learning has helped us add more problem-solving to our math program and encourage our students to engage in deeper discussion and use of mathematical vocabulary.

7. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy that permeates through our site is that all children will be successful if given the right supports. Our staff must determine what these supports are for each individual child, whether it be based around academic, social, emotional, or physical needs.

Our principal has served at Jensen Ranch for twelve years, eight as a fifth grade teacher, and four as the principal. She is a visible presence on the campus, whether observing teaching and learning in classrooms, supervising on the playground, or greeting families in the morning. She sets the tone to ensure that all feel welcome and included. Last year, she proposed that we begin each week with a Monday morning flag salute. Our whole school gathers to say the pledge, sing a patriotic song, make announcements and recognize students, parents, and staff for their contributions. We also began a monthly Coffee Hour, where parents can meet with the principal over breakfast to ask questions or get more information about a particular topic.

Four times per year, our principal meets with each teacher to discuss what is needed to help our students reach their potential. Additionally, the principal meets with our two head teachers every Friday to plan upcoming staff meetings and collaboration sessions or discuss any current issues. The intent of these meetings is to take a proactive approach towards the overall running of the school. They also help to increase the efficiency of our staff meetings, ensuring that conversation is relevant and targeted towards the needs of our students.

Jensen teachers serve as leaders in multiple capacities both on our campus and throughout the district. Contributions to district curricular committees and School Site Council help us improve the student experience. Our Student Success Team (SST), consisting of the principal, school psychologist, speech therapist, resource specialist teacher, general education teachers, and parents, meet weekly to discuss students in need of additional support. We devise action plans, focusing on providing teachers and parents with intervention strategies. We may decide to allocate time with our intervention aides, partner the student with an older buddy to serve as a tutor, or create a behavior support plan to help the student stay focused. Our teachers take the time to get to know each student, and this trusting relationship allows parents to feel supported. Our meetings are exceptionally thorough, and we attribute much of our school's success to our SST process.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3 Test: California Standards Test

Edition/Publication Year: 2007-2012 Publisher: Educational Testing Service (ETS)

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient/Advanced	99	97	97	100	100
Advanced	88	73	84	92	92
Number of students tested	70	66	60	79	60
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient/Advanced	100	97	91	100	100
Advanced	88	62	78	100	90
Number of students tested	16	26	22	16	19
2. African American Students					
Proficient/Advanced	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Advanced	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	3	3	3	7	2
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient/Advanced	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Advanced	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	5	9	2	8	5
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient/Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient/Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian American Students					
Proficient/Advanced	100	98	100	100	100
Advanced	91	79	98	96	95
Number of students tested	44	42	34	42	36
NOTES: Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested. As part of the nomination process, the California Department of Education combined a number of students into a single "Disadvantaged" subgroup. They were given permission to do so by the US Department of Education. Socioeconomically disadvantaged students, English learners, Special Education and Migrant students were included in this student group.					

13CA23

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3 Test: California Standards Test (CST)

Edition/Publication Year: 2007- 2012 Publisher: Educational Testing Service (ETS)

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient/Advanced	86	81	94	95	85
Advanced	70	52	57	58	52
Number of students tested	70	66	60	79	60
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient/Advanced	69	70	87	94	79
Advanced	57	43	41	50	37
Number of students tested	16	26	22	16	19
2. African American Students					
Proficient/Advanced	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Advanced	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	3	3	3	7	2
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient/Advanced	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Advanced	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	5	9	2	8	5
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient/Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient/Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian American Students					
Proficient/Advanced	87	77	98	98	87
Advanced	75	53	59	69	59
Number of students tested	44	42	34	42	36
NOTES: Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested. As part of the nomination process, the California Department of Education combined a number of students into a single "Disadvantaged" subgroup. They were given permission to do so by the US Department of Education. Socioeconomically disadvantaged students, English learners, Special Education and Migrant students were included in this student group.					

13CA23

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4 Test: California Standards Test

Edition/Publication Year: 2007-2012 Publisher: Educational Testing Service (ETS)

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient/Advanced	88	97	97	100	99
Advanced	61	75	76	95	86
Number of students tested	66	63	82	58	63
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient/Advanced	93	100	95	100	95
Advanced	62	85	70	94	85
Number of students tested	26	19	20	15	20
2. African American Students					
Proficient/Advanced	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Advanced	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	3	5	8	2	1
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient/Advanced	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Advanced	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	8	2	7	5	6
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient/Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient/Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian American Students					
Proficient/Advanced	91	100	100	100	100
Advanced	69	94	86	98	92
Number of students tested	42	33	43	34	34
NOTES: Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested. As part of the nomination process, the California Department of Education combined a number of students into a single "Disadvantaged" subgroup. They were given permission to do so by the US Department of Education. Socioeconomically disadvantaged students, English learners, Special Education and Migrant students were included in this student group.					

13CA23

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4 Test: California Standards Test

Edition/Publication Year: 2007-2012 Publisher: Educational Testing Service (ETS)

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient/Advanced	93	99	99	100	100
Advanced	75	88	85	94	86
Number of students tested	66	63	82	58	63
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient/Advanced	93	95	100	100	100
Advanced	66	90	85	87	80
Number of students tested	26	19	20	15	20
2. African American Students					
Proficient/Advanced	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Advanced	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	3	5	8	2	1
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient/Advanced	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Advanced	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	8	2	7	5	6
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient/Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient/Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian American Students					
Proficient/Advanced	89	100	100	100	100
Advanced	72	97	91	98	89
Number of students tested	42	33	43	34	34
NOTES: Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested. As part of the nomination process, the California Department of Education combined a number of students into a single "Disadvantaged" subgroup. They were given permission to do so by the US Department of Education. Socioeconomically disadvantaged students, English learners, Special Education and Migrant students were included in this student group.					

13CA23

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 5 Test: California Standards Test

Edition/Publication Year: 2007-2012 Publisher: Educational Testing Service (ETS)

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient/Advanced	97	94	100	99	94
Advanced	80	75	89	94	80
Number of students tested	64	81	62	62	59
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient/Advanced	96	95	100	92	87
Advanced	87	69	95	92	60
Number of students tested	22	19	17	12	15
2. African American Students					
Proficient/Advanced	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Advanced	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	4	8	3	1	3
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient/Advanced	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Advanced	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	3	9	8	5	4
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient/Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient/Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian American Students					
Proficient/Advanced	98	100	100	100	98
Advanced	92	90	94	98	88
Number of students tested	35	40	32	35	39
NOTES: Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested. As part of the nomination process, the California Department of Education combined a number of students into a single "Disadvantaged" subgroup. They were given permission to do so by the US Department of Education. Socioeconomically disadvantaged students, English learners, Special Education and Migrant students were included in this student group.					

13CA23

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5 Test: California Standards Test

Edition/Publication Year: 2007-2012 Publisher: Educational Testing Service (ETS)

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient/Advanced	99	96	97	99	92
Advanced	82	73	86	86	68
Number of students tested	64	81	62	62	59
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient/Advanced	96	90	100	92	74
Advanced	69	63	83	59	47
Number of students tested	22	19	17	12	15
2. African American Students					
Proficient/Advanced	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Advanced	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	4	8	3	1	3
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient/Advanced	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	
Advanced	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked	
Number of students tested	3	9	8	5	
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient/Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient/Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian American Students					
Proficient/Advanced	98	100	97	98	95
Advanced	89	85	91	86	83
Number of students tested	35	40	32	35	39
NOTES: Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested. As part of the nomination process, the California Department of Education combined a number of students into a single "Disadvantaged" subgroup. They were given permission to do so by the US Department of Education. Socioeconomically disadvantaged students, English learners, Special Education and Migrant students were included in this student group.					

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